

WAS JOHN BAPTIST LIKENED UNTO A REED.

"And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak to the people concerning John, saying, What went ye out into the wilderness to see?" Luke vii, 24.

Man is as grass and as the flower of the grass which is to-day and to-morrow cast into the oven. The reed, not flag, is the strongest of grasses and grows on low ground generally near lakes where the soil very deep and very fertile and moistened continually, where its roots can strike deep into the earth for its nourishment and grows a straight cane up to the height of 10 to 16 and more feet. It is protected by the high grounds on either side from the rude winds during its growing season. Now let us consider John a little while. John's parents were chosen of God. Luke i, 13. Zechariah a faithful priest and Elizabeth a pious, God fearing woman under those circumstances. Yea, and more for God performed a miracle on both Zechariah and Elizabeth to strengthen their faith in God. Was not the soil deep and well watered by the powers of God for their young reed to grow, also by the age of both parents for the foolish days were past, and in wisdom care and teach the child that it might lay hold on faith and grow in grace and knowledge, vastly, immensely above his fellow men so much indeed that Jesus said: "Among them that are born of women there is none greater than he. Nevertheless he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he."

But what went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind. What does the wind represent, the prince the power of the air. The circumstances which surrounded John in prison were all brought about by the adversary of Jesus that he was as a reed shaken by the wind. Let us look a little deeper into this place and we will see the cruel wind bend to the very earth our dear Saviour in the garden, but he rose up stronger than before. Again on the cross, when the fierce tempest of cruelty was rained upon that dear pitiful Jesus hanging there nailed through his hands and his feet, in his agony he cries out, my God, my God why hast thou forsaken me, the reed

broke, the earthly broke, but came forth a Heavenly. Praise the Lord forever for this. The winds, the power of the air will not only shake but break every one of us, but if the spirit of Christ be in us we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. It is worth our while to strive together with him, that we may be like him when he comes to transform us into his marvelous glory. Dear brethren and sisters let us strive earnestly to this end.

MRS S. C. HOSTETLER.

WE EITHER ENCOURAGE OR DISCOURAGE.

Christian friends how often we become discouraged when we look around and see the many hearts that are hardened, the many ears that harken not to the Master's call. Then we stop to wonder why all this. Now there are many reasons. But one reason we must all admit is the lack of energy and labor on the part of professors. How true the saying that there is hope for the person who is willing to labor, but there is no hope for one who spends his life in idleness. Now there are too many idle professors in the church, we firmly believe that sinners are tumbling over such so-called Christians into hell by the hundreds. Oh! how often, we see those who would be of noble service to the church absent themselves from service on account of something very trifling. Now brethren let us be very careful that we are not guilty of the awful crime of laying stumbling blocks in the way of sinners either by *commission* or *omission* for God will not be mocked.

Then let us give ourselves, our all into God's hands and pray that he would pour out such blessings upon us that we may not be able to contain. That we may impart to those around us the good tidings of a full gospel salvation. Let no thought of discouragement enter our minds. Let us try to do our part of the work, such as going out into the byways and hedges to gather them in, and trust firmly in God's word where he says he has power to "cleanse from all unrighteousness and keep," and not as some who think there are other things more effective in keeping than the power of God, and thereby lay stumbling blocks in the way of sinners. Let us not when things look gloomy blindly hasten to despair forgetting that when it is the darkest hour then soonest cometh the dawn.

J. W. FUNK.

Creston, Ohio.

Home Circle.

BE A WOMAN.

Aim to be a true woman, stout-hearted and brave;
Be one of the brightest of gifts God ever gave.
Be not lackadaisical, idle or vain,
But a woman to grapple with sorrow or pain.
Be a woman of smiles, not a woman of tears;
Be a woman of hope, not a woman of fears;
Be a woman of joy, when sorrows assail;
Be a help, not a clog, when misfortunes prevail.
Never mind if mistakes your life-path should throng;
Never mind a few jolts, as you journey along;
Be true to yourself, and be true to your God;
Be neither a weakling, nor only a clod.
Thus be a companion in womanly love;
And let not the world your integrity move.
Be a home-joy, a solace, the best that you can;
Oh! be what God made you—"a helpmate to man."
There are plenty of women the world never knew;
Yet the world is the better for all that they do.
There are many true women, whom to know is to love,
And whose work upon earth is blessed from above.

THE FOX IN THE GARDEN.

A FABLE FROM THE TALMUD.

A fox came near a very fine garden where he beheld lofty trees laden with fruit that charmed the eye. Such a beautiful sight, added to his natural greediness, excited in him the desire of possession. He fain would taste the forbidden fruit; but a high wall stood between him and the object of his wishes. He went about in search of an entrance, and at last found an opening in the wall, but it was too small to admit his body. Unable to penetrate, he had recourse to his usual cunning. He fasted three days, and became sufficiently reduced in bulk to crawl through the aperture. Having effected an entrance he carelessly roved about in this region, making free with its exquisite produce and feasting on its more rare and delicious fruits. He remained for some time and glutted his appetite, when a thought occurred to him that it was possible he might be observed, and in that case he should pay dearly for his feast. He therefore retired to the place where he had entered and attempted to get out, but to his great consternation he found his endeavors vain. He had by indulgence grown so fat and plump that the same space would no more admit him. "I am in a fine predicament," said he